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THE LATTER-DAY SAINTS'

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"For he that will love life, and see good days, let him refrain his tongue from evil, and his lips that they speak no guile" (I. PETER 3: 10).

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THE DOCTRINE OF CHARITY.*

BY PRESIDENT ANTHON H. LUND.

I HAVE listened with much attention to President Grant's remarks, and I hope that every heart will retain the good counsel he has given, and that all will remember it and make it the moving principle of their lives.

Love and charity, forgiveness, and doing our duties that the Lord has laid upon us are the key words or the key-note to this conference. You who have had much experience in life know the truth of what the President has expressed. In our intercourse with one another it often happens that a word may displease us; or the act of our brother cause us to blame him, and, perhaps, enlarge upon what he has done until we make it almost a crime. We ought to be careful not to let anything like this cause bitterness and hatred in our hearts, for as the President read to us, the Lord will forgive whom he will forgive, but he commands us that we shall forgive one another. This is a beautiful principle. When we remember the relationship, in which we stand to our heavenly Father and to his children, we ought to practice the principle of charity to one another. We generally love our own brothers and sisters; we are tender about what is said concerning them; we even feel anything said derogatory to their character to be almost the same as if it were said about our own. As we feel toward our own brothers and sisters, so we should likewise feel toward our brethren and sisters in the covenant and for all men. We should not let hatred enter our hearts. Let us forgive others their offenses in the hope that we can have forgiveness for our own.

*This discourse was delivered at the general conference in the Tabernacle, Salt Lake City, October 8th, 1920, and was the last, so far as we have seen reported, delivered by President Lund in that building.

The scriptures give us many examples of the blessedness of charity and forgiveness. I recall the story of David and Saul. Saul had learned that David had been anointed to become king of Israel. Although at one time he loved David, and David had been able with his singing and his harp to drive out the evil spirit from the old king, yet when the king heard of the destiny of his own house, that his son was not to rule in Israel, that the kingdom was to be given to David, his heart was filled with hatred. He took three thousand men and went down into the southern part of Palestine, among the mountains, hunting for David and the few followers he had with him, determined to kill him. Saul entered a cave where David and his associates were hiding. David knew the king had come to make him a captive and to take his life; yet he would not hurt Saul, because he was the anointed of the Lord. He cut off the skirt of Saul's robe and left the cave. In the morning when the king left the cave David cried to him and showed him what he had done. The king felt repentant for a little while. He knew he had been in the power of the man whose life he sought, and he acknowledged that David was more just than himself. He saw that David had not exercised the power he had to kill the one who sought his life. David felt reverence for the man who had been anointed by a prophet of God. I am sorry to say that Saul's good mood did not last long, but still there was a moment when he felt the power of forgiveness working upon him.

Jesus in one of his parables tells about the servant that owed his master a great sum of money, so much that he could never pay it; but because of his pleading his master forgave him and let him go. When going from his master's house he met a man who owed him a very small amount. The servant that had been forgiven so much was not willing to forgive this other man the small amount that he owed, and being unable to pay the wicked servant cast him into prison until he could pay the debt. When the master heard of this unforgiving man's act, he called him back and measured out to him his punishment for being so hard-hearted and so ungrateful for the blessings he had received.

Jesus taught his disciples how to pray, and one part of that prayer is, "Forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors." That is the principle. We all know how greatly we are indebted to our heavenly Father, and remembering this we ought to be willing to forgive all men their trespasses against us.

Let us not entertain hatred against anyone, whether he is connected with the Church or not. That feeling ought not to be harbored in our breasts. Let us rather feel to imitate our great Master. He not only taught, as he did in the parable just related, the necessity and the importance of forgiving others as we want to be forgiven, but he showed forth this spirit in his life. When he was crucified at Golgotha—and it is said that the suffering of

the crucifixion is the keenest kind of torture—suffering intensely and knowing that he was innocent, and that those, for whom he had labored and desired greatly to save, had hung him on that accursed tree, he did not ask the Lord to take revenge upon them, but asked his Father in heaven to "Forgive them, for they know not what they do." Just think of his asking for their forgiveness when he was under such intense suffering on the cross! There is the example for us. We must exercise charity for one another and avoid letting ill-feelings rankle in our hearts against any person.

We have not the right to hate any of the creatures of God, but we have been commanded to love them, and also to forgive them if they have offended us. I believe that you can put this down as a principle: that to start with there are very few offenders, who wilfully intend to offend, not having given full thought to their acts. They do something that offends us, and we at once feel offended and angry and, perhaps, we let it grow to that greater amount of anger that we call hatred. This should not be. Perhaps if we had spoken to our brother at once, we would have learned that he did not really mean what we thought he did, and that we have become offended too hastily. Let us have enough charity for one another that we will not allow anything to be an offense to cause us hardness of heart.

I remember once I went with President Grant and two others of the apostles to investigate complaints against a certain bishop. Among those opposed to the bishop was a man who had much influence with the people. He and the bishop almost hated each other. We brought them together, they freely expressed their feelings and what had caused them. We acted as peacemakers; and when they saw their error, with tears in their eyes, they clasped hands and forgave each other. It was a touching scene, and joy filled all our hearts. After that the bishop was reconciled to his opposers. Now, brethren and sisters, those men felt happy afterwards. They felt that they had suffered for a long time from something that they ought not to have borne in their hearts. As President Grant has told us, anyone who forgives his enemy or his brother what he has done against him, feels joy in his heart and the spirit whispers that he has done the right thing.

Now, let us learn to have charity for one another, and carry it out in our every-day lives, and we will make life happy to ourselves and to our neighbors and our paths will be much smoother.

May the Lord help us to do our duties in all the different lines of work given us, and may we ever remember what we owe to our heavenly Father and try to show love to our brethren and sisters. I ask the Lord to help us in this matter, in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

Do the duty which lies nearest thee, which thou knowest to be a duty! Thy second duty will already have become clearer.

COURTESY.

COURTESY is applicable to all phases of human life, and its most essential qualification is truth. We may not exactly define the word; yet we are approaching the Golden Rule if we term it a kindly and thoughtful consideration for others: "The flower of courtesy does not very well bide handling, but if we dare to open another leaf, and explore what parts go to its conformation, we shall find also an intellectual quality."—Emerson.

The origin of the word is hundreds of years old, and has been handed down to us as follows: In olden times only the king and his courtiers thought of learning and practicing what we call good manners, and the rest of the people, with the exception, perhaps, of the monks and clergy, were very ignorant and rough. Good manners are like flowers, and need a suitable soil in which to grow and thrive, and ignorance is not a suitable soil. Even the manners of the court were very crude and elementary; for example, the duty of courtesy to inferiors was hardly recognized. But such as they were; manners were to be found only at the court, and so were known as court manners, or courtesy.

Turning to the Bible we read, "Whatsoever ye would that men should do unto you, do ye even so to them, for this is the law and the prophets." This command then is not only the corner-stone of the Christian religion, but the verse tells us it is a summary of what the Jews had been taught from the time of Moses to the dawn of Christianity. Thus the Creator in his plan for our perfection considered brotherly love or courtesy just as essential as food and raiment. In a way similar to the pure gospel of our Lord, it has become perverted to accommodate and soothe the consciences of the professing followers of the lowly Nazarene, who pause at the base of Calvary, fearing lest to reach the summit, they, like the Master, will be required to make the supreme sacrifice of worldly praise and aggrandizement. They petition their god with much the same sentiments as expressed by Omar Khayyâm the Persian voluptuary: "Reconcile the law to my desires."

We are often told that courtesy is simple politeness or good manners; but this is a mistake, which we should all try to guard against, because it is only half the truth. Unfortunately we are sometimes polite without being courteous; and we sometimes find that people who are over anxious to impress others with their fine manners are so, from other motives than kindness. Such would do well to adopt the motto, "*Esse, quam videri*," which means, "To be, rather than to seem." There is a story told of a squire who had a very great objection to anyone occupying his pew at church. Upon one occasion, at the conclusion of a service, he went to the vicar and complained bitterly of the stranger, who had unconsciously intruded. It was a very large pew,

capable of holding nine, and the only occupants had been the squire and the unwelcome visitor. "I could not think," added the squire, "of disturbing divine service by putting him out violently; and the only thing I could do with courtesy was to sit on his hat." A very peculiar idea of courtesy, is it not? Yet many people, like this selfish squire, while outwardly professing to serve God, go through life destroying the property and reputation of their fellow-men and justify themselves as acting courteously, because they do not use physical force. Then we have another class who have acquired the art of irritating others, it seemingly being the only means they have to attract public attention to themselves. Small honors and a little money usually swell up the little minds of these little people, to such a degree that to make an apology for their misdeeds they consider undignified. As Young says: "Pigmies are pigmies still, though perched on Alps; and pyramids are pyramids in vales." Do men gather grapes of thorns or figs of thistles? We all know the parable of the good Samaritan, which is a good example of practical courtesy. Now the men who "passed by on the other side" thought they felt quite as sorry for the man who the robbers had treated so badly, as did the Samaritan. But he put his sympathy to practical effect, he acted courteously. We may be full to overflowing of kindly thoughts for others, but something more is needed. We must do, as well as feel. Whether our fellow-creatures be companions or strangers, friends or enemies, rich or poor, wise or stupid, courtesy is the debt we owe to all.

Courtesy is a flower of slow growth, and it is only by constant tending that it reaches perfection. Never neglect trifles, for we never can tell at the time whether anything is a trifle or not. A friend once called on Michael Angelo, and found him putting the finishing touches to a statue. A few days later he called again, and to his surprise the sculptor was still working at the same figure. "How is this?" he exclaimed. "You have been very idle since I was here last." "Not at all," replied the artist; "on the contrary, I have been very busy. I have touched up this part and polished that. I have given a softer appearance to this feature, and more expression to this lip. I have also improved this limb, and brought out this muscle." "Yes, yes," said his friend, somewhat impatiently, "but all these are trifles." The sculptor smiled. "Perhaps so," said he, "but recollect that trifles make perfection, and perfection is no trifle."

"Shall courtesy be done only to the rich, and by the rich? In good manners I discern no special connection with wealth or birth; but rather it lies in human nature itself, and is due from all men to all men" (Carlyle). Every man's name, that emerged at all from the mass in the feudal ages, rattles in the ears to-day like a flourish of trumpets; and we are constantly confronted with the proud boasts of individuals as being descendants of

noble ancestors; an honor to be sure, if they themselves possess nobility of character. But to be truly great one need not trace the family pedigree for titles, the germ of personal worth lies in the individual. There are thousands of people living in the world to-day who by their acts of chivalry meet all the qualifications of a knight of the Round Table; but the noble deeds of these twentieth century knights are often done without acknowledgement or reward. Nevertheless there is an all seeing Eye which never fails to record that greater love, which causeth a man to lay down his life for his friends. The Bible says, "Man know thyself." Ye who vainly boast of noble lineage apply the following to yourselves and find out how far short of knighthood you really are. "A good citizen: strong and courageous in doing your duty. Courteous. Prompt to help the sick, the suffering, the weak. Ready to forgive an injury. Loyal to your friends. Pure, truthful, and honest.

THOMAS FINCH.

MINUTES OF THE BRISTOL CONFERENCE.

THE Bristol Semi-annual conference was held March 6th, 1921, at Bristol. There were in attendance President George Albert Smith, Sister Lucy E. W. Smith, President James Gunn McKay, Sister Anna O. McKay, Elders Fred. R. Morgan, Harvey D. Hansen, David N. Low, Frank Lockyer, Richard Williams, Jr., and Gomer O. Thomas, and officers and saints from seven branches. Altogether there were held five sessions, namely: Sunday-school, elders' meeting, sacrament, priesthood and evening meeting. The first session was devoted to program, furnished by the different Sunday-schools. The second was for the instruction of the elders; the third was for sacrament, when President Smith presented the names of the authorities of the Church. President James Gunn McKay, as president, and Sister Anna O. McKay, as clerk of the Bristol conference, were honorably released. Elder David N. Low was sustained as president, and Elder Fred. Morgan as clerk of the Bristol conference, with headquarters at Cardiff. At the fourth meeting, reports from the branch presidents were heard, which showed that the conference had held its own in membership, increased in the paying of tithes and offerings, in the number of organizations, the number holding the priesthood and the number of officers, and that the standard of living the gospel had been raised. At the fifth and last session, President Smith gave an excellent discourse, greatly interesting and edifying all who had the pleasure to hear him. All the visiting brethren and sisters spoke at the conference. There were not many strangers present, owing to the fact that the times and places of the meetings could not be advertized.

But there was a happy, peaceful spirit present, which the saints enjoyed. It was the first time that a conference had been held at Bristol for over four years.

A social of the Bristol branch was held at the home of Mrs. Mary J. Bryant, in Bristol. President George Albert Smith and wife, and President James Gunn McKay and wife, and the elders of the Bristol conference were present; also, besides the local members, a number of saints from other branches. The program consisted of songs and recitations, which were well received.

LINCOLN'S BIRTHDAY.

THERE could not be more fitting memorials of the unity of sentiment, between the two great English-speaking countries, concerning the preservation of free and fair democratic government at the leadership of the civilized nations, than in the erection in Westminster yard of the notable statue of Abraham Lincoln, which was unveiled last summer, and of the proposed statue in honor of George Washington to be raised in Trafalgar square. These heroes of America have come to be also regarded as heroes of the English, inasmuch as they were of English descent and the achievements of their great lives have done honor to the best traditions of the English race, in promoting the civilization of mankind. John Q. Cannon, Editor of the *Deseret News*, pays the following eloquent tribute to Lincoln, in a recent issue of that paper:

"To-day is Lincoln's birthday; and though in many communities no festivities of a formal character are held, the day—everywhere throughout the land—is marked by a spirit of reverence and quiet remembering. It is not a day for blare of trumpets or boisterous revelry; somehow these do not harmonize with Lincoln as we have come to think of him. It is rather a day for contemplation, for prayerful humility and high resolve. By such an attitude we seem to get into closer touch with the great and beloved leader whose memory the day recalls. Out of the complex of his personal characteristics, and out of the maelstrom of stirring events in which his life was engulfed, through the vista of years, stands Lincoln the man. It is his human qualities, his simple virtues, that more than anything else have endeared him to us. We read of his exploits and triumphs in statesmanship and we admire them; we reflect on the intense and dramatic wartime scenes through which he passed and we are stirred by them: but as we look back upon his rugged, kindly face we are drawn to him; and as we gaze into his sad and gentle eyes, we come to love him. By the power of his strength and deeds he has made his place in history; by his gentleness and love for humanity he has enshrined himself in the people's hearts."

THE LATTER-DAY SAINTS' MILLENNIAL STAR.

THURSDAY, MARCH 17, 1921.

EDITORIAL:

SEEING SOME NOTABLES.

WHILE upon an important visit to the Nottingham conference, in which he attended an interesting branch conference at Leicester, Febrnary 21st, and a meeting at Hncknall on the 22nd, President George Albert Smith, accompanied by his daughter, Edith, extended his trip to London and Oxford.

One object of President Smith's visit was to accept the hospitable invitation of Mr. Charles P. Webber, a merchant of Oxford, who, being a member of the Draper's Chamber of Trade of the United Kingdom, and attendant at the annnal general meeting, had asked President George Albert Smith to meet him there. Mr. Webber was one of twenty prominent merchants of Great Britain who tonred the United States in the snmmer of 1920, and visited Salt Lake City, where they were entertained by representative bnsiness men, and formed friendships which they appear to cherish. President Smith has already met six of these British merchants since their return, and been most courteonsly treated by them. The meeting referred to in London was held in the Draper's Hall. This is an old and quite wonderful building, erected in the year 1541. Its principal hall is gorgeously decorated with mnral paintings, an especially fine ceiling, and contains statnes and tapestry of rare excellence and worth, considered among the real treasnres of London. The Draper's Chamber of Trade has over three thonsand members, and there was a large representation present at the meetings held on Febrnary 22nd and 23rd.

Upon meeting Mr. Webber at the Draper's Hall, President Smith was invited to the platform and introdnced to J. Arthnr Pyne, Esq., President of the Chamber, who introduced him, as a friend from America, for a speech, which was delivered briefly and received with applanse. President James Gnnn McKay and Elder Harold Bennett were with him, and these three were entertained by Mr. Webber at lnncheon.

Prior to leaving London, Febrnary 25th, President Smith called at the Mansion House and was conrteonsly received by the Right Honorable James Roll, the Lord Mayor of London, with whom he enjoyed a few minutes' chat, relnctantly cnt short by the Lord Mayor's previons engagements.

On the following Saturday, Febrnary 26th, President Smith and daughter, were taken by Elder Ralph Pugh and wife, in their tonring car to Oxford, as gnests for the day of Mr. Webber and

family. This proved to be a delightful experience for them, as they were not only hospitably entertained at Mr. Webber's beautiful home, but they were escorted through the wonderful university city, visiting the principal colleges and places of historic interest. When it has been possible to meet intelligent professional, or business men, such as Mr. Webber, whose travels have taken them to Utah, where they came in contact with the Mormon population, President Smith has usually found that such travelers are relieved of their prejudices; and they manifest an interest in our people and an appreciation of their representative men, that is in strong contrast with the evil reports of so many irresponsible sensational writers and speakers.

Before leaving Bristol, after holding conference there on March 6th, President Smith called upon the U. S. Consul, Hon. Robertson Honey, and through his courtesy an interview was arranged with Rt. Hon. G. B. Britton, Lord Mayor of Bristol. This was quite friendly and enjoyable, though brief, the Lord Mayor showing keen interest in all that President Smith had to say; and remarked that he would be pleased to receive from him a view book of Salt Lake City, and other literature, with sincere thanks. While at the Town Hall the Lord Mayor's secretary conducted the President over the building, which is quite remarkable. Among its attractions is a series of mural paintings portraying the history of the city, one of Great Britain's oldest and most famous seaports.

J. F. W.

THE SWISS AND GERMAN MISSION.

SOME interesting items gleaned from the report of the Swiss and German mission for the year 1920, will be read with pleasure by the saints everywhere. President Serge F. Ballif, who succeeded Elder Augus J. Cannon, writes exhaustively of the conditions in his field of labor, which covers a large part of the Continent now suffering from the economic devastation of the great war.

He says respecting the values of money, that four-fifths of their accounts are reckoned by the German mark, which is normally worth over twenty cents, but is now worth about one and three-tenths cents. The value of the Swiss franc is also about twenty cents, but is now worth only sixteen. This reduced value of the money used, together with the extremely high prices of every commodity, has made it impossible for the average laborer to provide sufficient food and clothing for his family. The condition of poor saints, as well as others throughout Germany, Austria, and Hungary, is described as most pitiful; disease resulting from under-nourishment is making havoc with the lives of children and weak persons. Young and middle-aged men frequently take refuge in Switzerland, in the hope of recuperation from the miserable plight their poverty has reduced them to in those

countries. The mission is helping to preserve the lives of some of these, as well as to distribute relief to the suffering saints, generally, so far as means are provided.

Notwithstanding the poverty of the people the prosperity of the mission is quite wonderful. The attitude of the government towards the missionaries and the organized branches has been so changed that now help is given them to procure meeting places, and ample protection is provided against violence of any kind, by the authorities. Before the war, public meetings were forbidden, and elders were imprisoned and banished when found holding them in private. The gospel has been so gladly accepted recently that many new branches have been organized and large numbers added to the Church by baptism. There were eleven hundred and sixty-five baptisms and two hundred and eighty-five children blessed during the year. This brings up the membership of this mission to something under ten thousand souls; of whom over forty per cent. are tithe-payers.

President Ballif says: "We have in the mission over sixty missionaries, and they are all traveling without purse or scrip. They have the true missionary spirit. They are humble, prayerful, clean and pure, willing and ready to do all that is required of them." These are nearly all volunteer native Latter-day Saints. who have been drawn into the mission field in such manner as follows: "On my last trip I held a meeting at Stuttgart, January 14th, 1921. At the priesthood meeting, three young men came forward and offered their services as missionaries, able to support themselves and travel without purse or scrip. At the evening meeting there were one hundred and eighty saints present, and seventy friends; a most wonderful meeting. The following Sunday, at Nurnburg, I was surprised to see the activities of the teachers and students of the Sunday-school. They are as active and efficient as most of our Sunday-schools in Zion. Departments were conducted in the same order as at home, and each officer seemed to have the spirit of his calling. One hundred and twenty children were present as friends. At the evening service there were over eighty friends, and the house was filled to its capacity with members. After the meeting a man in the audience sent me two hundred marks to assist our missionary work; two young men came forward and offered their services as missionaries. On Monday we went to Erfurt and were welcomed by one hundred and eighty members, and sixty-one friends. The house was beautifully decorated with flowers. I also visited Gera, Breslau, Berlin, Stettin, Königsberg, Danzig, Tilsit, Hamburg, Herne and Cologne, and I can say the Lord is working wonders among this people. Our greatest trouble is to get meeting-houses. In some instances we are using school-houses, and receive very kind treatment from the officials. It seems that the better classes of the people are investigating the gospel.

About six weeks ago I addressed a letter to the President of the German government, at Berlin, asking that we be recognized as a church, and as the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. On Saturday a man from Berlin came to our office to investigate. He had a grip full of papers on us, and asked many questions. I explained carefully to him the principles of the gospel and the divine mission of the Prophet Joseph Smith, and he seemed very much impressed and very friendly. I explained our attitude, as a community, and our mission, the work we are doing in all the world, especially our work in Switzerland, Germany, Austria and Hungary. Incidentally I told him of some difficulty we were having, in going from our office in Basel across the frontier to Lörrock, and he immediately went to the telephone and talked with the consul, at the Badisher Bannhof, requesting him to relieve us of this trouble. He said as he left us that he should make his report to Berlin, and undoubtedly in a short time we should hear from there; also that he was anxious to read our works and become more fully acquainted with our people. I have sent him some of our literature. Secretary Winters and I afterwards went to the Badisher Bannhof, were received very kindly and were given the permission we desired, to go to and from Lörrock, unmolested."

President Ballif further says: "We are very, very much in need of at least a thousand missionaries to fill the demand here and in Germany. We could use them in two or three cities in Germany, Austria and Hungary. We now have only two missionaries in Austria and we need fifty. The demand for our literature is so great that we are not able to supply it. An edition of two thousand Books of Mormon has just been issued, and we have placed an order for three thousand more. We have also ordered a large edition of Sunday-school song-books, and the printing of a million tracts, to supply the great demand. Our supply of Articles of Faith, Voice of Warning and Church history are running so low that we must republish them, even at present great expense, to meet the pressing demand."

This is cheering news from that part of the Lord's vineyard. It presages an important development in the European mission. The fact that the branches, though deprived of elders from Zion, and almost stripped of their local priesthood, managed to survive the great war; that the Sunday-schools were maintained, largely through the faithfulness of the sisters, speaks unmistakably of the sure foundation of firm faith, that had been laid among the members of that mission. Although the prohibitive restrictions are somewhat relieved, and elders from Zion are beginning to find freedom to labor there, the important thing is that local members are entering the field as volunteer missionaries and are doing good service, winning many converts and building up the branches by their counsel, instruction and zealous example. In this the favor of the Lord is abundantly manifest and will con-

tinue, until those nations shall be warned and the humble and honest in heart among their people shall have the opportunity to learn and obey the truth.

J. F. W.

INFLUENCE OF THE BIBLE.

FEW people have any idea to what extent we are indebted to the Bible for much of our language. Words are the symbols of ideas, intended to convey thoughts to the minds of others, though I have heard it said that instead of giving expression to thoughts, words are quite frequently employed for the purpose of concealing one's feelings. The English language is that of a Christian people, whose thoughts and fears and hopes are Christian, and these have become the very life-blood of the language. Take from among Christian nations, the thoughts, the feelings and the aspirations that the Bible has inspired and their language would become meaningless verbiage—a body from which the spirit has departed, a rose whence has flown the blush that made it beautiful, a violet whose perfume is shed, the withered petals only left to remind one of that which had once been so sweet and so lovely.

The current of our lives has been shaped by the ever inflowing tide of Bible principles, and we are borne unconsciously upon its bosom, striving vainly at times to stay its outward course, yet possessed the while with an intuitive knowledge that it will still buoy us on and, if we are but willing, place us, in the end, on the safe shore of that land where all paths are those of pleasantness and all ways are those of peace. Its power is no less potent on those who yield, than over those who resist its beneficent influence; and who, were they sufficiently strong, would so change its current, as not only to insure their own destruction, but that also of those who are capable of beholding its power for good. The Christianity of the Bible is the life-blood: nay, the very source of our language—the fountain whence flows our feelings. Words are the mere machines by which these feelings are conveyed to others. To destroy the fountain thereof, would be to render valueless all the complicated and multifarious machinery of language, by which the living waters have been distributed among mankind. In vain do skeptics and atheists attempt to overcome this fact, which offers such stubborn resistance that it has never been shaken, nor ever will be, until, from another source, mankind gradually imbibes new hopes and fears. What promises are held out by all civilized men to their struggling fellows as a sure reward for well-doing? Only such as the Bible gives. Whence comes that unfailing assurance that every man will reap the results of his evil deeds? From the Bible. If we bless, it is with such a blessing as the God of the Bible has

promised; and to curse, is to steal the vengeance of Almighty God, which the Bible records. Whether, therefore, we bless or whether we curse, civilized people all appeal to the Bible. The weapons which the atheist and the skeptic command, when assaulting Christianity, are such as have been stolen from this armory. The Promethean fire they would have us believe has been imparted to them by that will-o'-the-wisp godless "liberty" or "free thought," is in truth, the sacred flame of the Bible, which has withstood the assaults of ages and grown only brighter by the contest. Is it to lose its lustre now because of the puny strivings of those who would scatter its glowing embers to the four winds of envy, ignorance, hatred and ingratitude? Try the atheist. Ask him for a hope, and if he responds, he will give you such as the Bible has held out temptingly for ages. Offend him, and he will damn you with Bible judgment, or he will call upon the great Being, whose very existence he denies, to afflict you with a curse which the Bible has taught him. So it has been for ages; and there is as little reason for wishing, as hope of seeing, the influence of the Bible, and its effect in moulding our thoughts and thus creating our language, lessened, during the centuries that are to come.

Prayer is the easiest form of speech
That infant lips can try;
Prayer, the sublimest strains that reach
The Majesty on high.

We imbibe Christianity from the moment we are conceived. The nourishment given by a mother to the nestling babe carries in its flow the imperceptible germs of that unseen power. Our surroundings as we live through infancy, as we leave childhood, as we pass from youth, as we depart from maturity, and as we sink into the grave are all Christian. Strive as we may, that unseen and subtle power pervades our lives, nourishes us, and is, as it were, in the very air we breathe, in every muscle and fibre of our being. To attempt to escape its influence were as vain as for a man to hope to exist without food, without air—to live on after the last drop of blood had ebbed from the stilled heart. It cannot be. The very denial of its existence seems to carry with it an acknowledgment of its mysterious, yet irresistible power. The greater the exertion displayed by the skeptic in his endeavor to live without it, the more palpable becomes the evidence that he cannot shake off its spell; but like a plant partially torn from the nourishing soil, by an unhappy chance wind, he lives on development—to his glorying in what he foolishly believes is complete independence of the conditions so essential to his very existence.

Atheism is suicide. It is the suicide of all that is in the man which is worth the keeping—his higher, his spiritual nature.

Such flashes of light as may be seen, are but the re-kindling (too often only momentary) of the embers of Christianity, still slumbering amid the deadening ashes of his hatred to the better life that lies before him. Yes, there are ashes among the flames of Christianity. Many of them. The hearth is not always clean; but he were foolish, indeed, who would cast aside the diamond because of its lack of lustre. The gem of Christianity has not yet reached that alluring brightness which is to attract all because of its brilliance. Christianity Bible teaching, needs the individual polishing that its inherent beauty may truly shine. That once given, it becomes a light pure and dazzling beyond all else— the sun of the soul. "Truly the light is sweet and a pleasant thing it is for the eye to behold the sun," but how much more to feel that spiritual illumination which floods the whole being with ineffable glory!

Yet, to destroy this is, summing the question up, the work of the atheist. And with its destruction, could it be accomplished, would come the loss of hope and a feeling presence of fear that could know no relief. The aspiration which now moves us to exertion, because of the assurance of reward, would be unknown; we would become poorer than the brutes; for the fountain of our thoughts drying up, the vessels with which we now quench the thirst of each other—words or language—would be as a stench in our nostrils, a mockery in our sight, and a fate infinitely worse than barbarism would necessarily result. So closely, so wholly has the Bible become the life of our language, by being the nourishment on which our thoughts thrive, that could it be destroyed in a day, together with its effects, I do not believe there would be left a solitary result of our nineteen hundred years of Christian civilization. The Bible is the mother of our language, and, passing unnoticed the fact, upon its teachings are based our laws, while most hopes for the future rest upon its promises. It should be reverenced, if not for its age, at least for the reason that it has given birth to superb language and shaped the current upon which the ship of civilization glides.

R. W. Sloan.

FROM THE MISSION FIELD.

Baptisms.—March 5th, 1921, a baptismal service was held at Sunderland, when three new members and two children were baptized into the fold by President David E. Randall.

Organization.—Sunday, March 6th, 1921, President William Easton and Elder Clyde Romney organized the Relief Society at the Airdrie branch: Margaret H. M. Graham, president; Elizabeth C. Laird and Sarah H. G. Beggs, counselors.

Arrivals.—The following elders from Zion arrived per s.s. *Melita*, March 6th, 1921, and were appointed temporarily to London: James Ira May, Honeyville, Utah; Edgar Wallace Jeffery, Delta, Utah; William Hunt, Plain City, Utah; David Dudley Terry, Delta, Utah; Cyril Kenneth Munk, King, Utah; James Hutchinson Western, Deseret, Utah; Kenneth E. Coombs, Garland, Utah; George Renel Follick, Montpelier, Idaho.

Branch Conferences.—The Sheffield branch conference was held on Sunday, March 6th, 1921. There were in attendance President Joseph Hamstead, Elders Dan C. Smedley, William L. Wyatt, Leigh W. Clark, Alvin G. Lovell, Homer Taylor, and Ervin Rawlings. Three sessions were held. The meetings were conducted by Brother Oliver Shaw. The general and local authorities were presented by Brother Joseph T. Quiney. The exercises of the Sunday-school children were beautifully rendered, after which the local and traveling elders gave instructive talks upon the principles of the gospel. The meetings were well attended, including many investigators.

On February 20th, 1921, the Watford branch held their conference. Elders Robert E. Griffiths, Thomas Finlayson and Adolph Soderberg were in attendance. The reports given showed the branch in fairly good condition.

Socials.—February 23th, 1921, the South Shields branch Sunday-school held their Christmas social, with a beautifully served tea to a goodly representation of the branch and several of their friends. After tea many enjoyable games were indulged in, and a pleasing program was rendered by members of the Sunday-school. An interesting feature was the presentation of many valuable prizes for good attendance and preparedness in the Sunday-school class during the past year.

An enjoyable evening was spent February 19th, 1921, at Sheffield, when the Sunday-school officers gave a grand tea and social. Elder Dan C. Smedley took charge of the program, which was a rendition of songs, recitations, and musical selections, after which, Brother Richard S. Gregory presented the Sunday-school scholars with beautiful prizes. The time was then turned over to games, etc.

February 24th, 1921, the Sunderland branch held a farewell social for President David E. Randall, who sails for his home in Ogden, Utah, March 12th. A well arranged program of music and readings, with delicious refreshments passed around, made the evening such that all present resolved never to miss another.

The Cheltenham Relief Society held a social at Mrs. Gilbert Day's home. A program was enjoyed and a contribution was made toward replenishing the treasury. All present greatly enjoyed themselves.

March 2nd, 1921, the Gateshead branch held a farewell social in honor of Sister Stawart and Brother Robert Stawart, of that branch, and President David E. Randall, who are leaving for Utah, March 12th, 1921. The party commenced by the Relief Society serving a very beautiful tea. The evening was enjoyably spent with many games, and a program of music and recitations. A prominent feature was the presentation to Sister Stawart of a beautiful set of spoons in a case, and a carving set, presented to President Randall, followed by speeches which showed the regret in the parting of dear friends. The presents were furnished by the Gateshead branch. The social closed by all joining hands and singing "Auld Lang Syne," and in wishing the departing ones God-speed on their journey.

February 21st, 1921, a farewell social was held at Shildon in honor of President Randall. An enjoyable program was given consisting of songs, recitations and games. A good attendance of the saints and friends, enjoyed the occasion. A beautiful remembrance was given President Randall.

On Saturday, February 13th, 1921, a social was held in the Eastwood branch, Nottingham conference. The cantata, "Busy Bees," conducted by Brother George W. Thompson, was a great success. Refreshments were served. All appeared well pleased with the evening's entertainment. Eighty-five souls crowded into the room, whose capacity is for forty.

A social was given in the Lord Street Reading Room at Carlisle, Newcastle conference. The program consisted of songs, readings and games and refreshments. There were fifty people present, among whom were many strangers, who enjoyed the spirit of the occasion.

DIED.

COOK.—At Glasgow, John Cook, February 12th, 1921, at the age of eighty. His wife Agnes also died on February 28th, at the same age. Brother Cook has been a faithful member of the Church for forty years.

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